

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed April 23, 2004, Applicants amend their application and request reconsideration. In this Amendment, no claims are added or cancelled so that claims 1-3 remain pending.

In this Amendment claim 1 is amended, consistent with the original disclosure, to describe the driving source as a motor and to describe the location of that motor with respect to the two fixed lens groups. The Amendment is fully supported by the application as filed. In the illustrated embodiments, for example, as illustrated in Figures 7 and 11-15 of the patent application, the motor 95 is located between the two fixed lens groups and remains in that position in the leading cylindrical body, as the cylindrical bodies extend and retract in a telescopic fashion.

Claims 1-3 were rejected as unpatentable over Sasaki et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,886,826, hereinafter Sasaki) in view of Kimura et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,812,189, hereinafter Kimura).

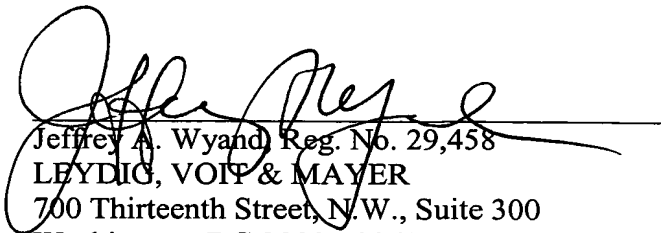
In Sasaki, there appear to be three motors, motors 25, 29, and 30. Motor 25 is only illustrated schematically. Motors 29 and 30 are located in the same position with respect to the lenses of the lens barrel assembly described by Sasaki. See Figures 8-11 and 14-16 of Sasaki. The motors 29 and 30 are located adjacent a single fixed lens group L1 and not between two fixed lens groups as in the invention.

Kimura does not describe a different structure that would suggest the invention as described in amended claim 1. In Kimura, for example in Figure 20, there are two motors illustrated, motor 1045 and motor 1053. Neither of these motors is located in the leading barrel of the lens barrel structure and neither motor is located between two fixed lens groups. Thus, even if Sasaki could be modified in some way by Kimura, the invention as defined by amended claim 1, and therefore by claims 2 and 3, could not be supplied. Moreover, in the invention, the location of the motor is more advantageous than the locations illustrated in either of Sasaki and Kimura from the point of view of protecting the motor, the lens moving mechanism driven by the motor, and lens surfaces from dust, dirt and other contamination, an important consideration in driving the movable lens group and the lens barrel.

In re Appln. of NOZAWA et al.
Application No. 09/899,191

Reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-3 are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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Amendment or ROA - Regular (Revised 6/5/04)